

## First Language (L1) Acquisition

Factor	Questions to Address
<b>Age:</b> When does language acquisition begin and how does it progress?	<p>Language acquisition in native language begins in infancy.</p> <p>Stages:</p> <p><b>0-6 months:</b> Pre-language Communications (cooing, crying and smiling)</p> <p><b>6-12 months:</b> Babbling (combines consonants and vowels, e.g., dadada)</p> <p><b>12-18 months:</b> Holophrastic (1-2 word sentences are created)</p> <p><b>18 -24 months:</b> Combining Words. Children begin stringing more words together.</p> <p>Even as they get older, children's speech and language will differ from an adult language. Sounds and production will start to be more equivalent to that of adults around age 6. Children will also develop more complex syntax and morphology as they get older (Gass and Selinker, 2008).</p>
<b>Sound System:</b> How do young children learn the L1 sound system and the rules of the native language?	<p>Children learn the sound system and rules of L1 via environmental exposure to language. The children must be able to listen to the language around them to acquire it. The learning is internalized and subconscious. Even children under a year are able to use intonation, loudness and pitch in some forms to communicate (Gass and Selinker, 2008). If a child is in a language-deprived environment, there will be less exposure to the native language and the child will not acquire language and easily as peers in a language-rich environment.</p>
<b>Learning Environment:</b> Where does L1 take place and under what conditions and circumstances does early language learning occur?	<p>L1 takes place in all environments to which a child is exposed and the native language is spoken. If only L1 is spoken at home, this is likely the place where most language learning occurs. Early caregivers are crucial to the language development of a child because children need to be spoken to and communicated with in order to acquire a strong language foundation. These processes just occur naturally and with all children unless there is a cognitive delay. If circumstances produce a home environment lacking in language opportunities, children will still acquire language, but it will not be as rich or complete as others.</p>

## Second Language (L2) Acquisition

Factor	Questions to Address
<b>Age:</b> When does second language acquisition begin and how does it progress?	<p>L2 acquisition begins when the learner is first exposed to the second language, usually in a formal class setting or surrounding environment..</p> <p>Stages:</p> <p><b>Pre-Production:</b> This is the silent period where the learner concentrates more on listening comprehension than speaking.</p> <p><b>Early Production:</b> Includes 1-2 word sentences and vocabulary of roughly 1000 words</p> <p><b>Speech Emergence:</b> Sentences are comprised of more words and learners are able to ask some questions. Learners have a vocabulary of about 3000 words.</p> <p><b>Intermediate Fluency:</b> More complex and varied sentence structures are used by speakers, and the speakers have expanded vocabulary to about 6000 words.</p> <p><b>Advanced Fluency</b> (Haynes, 2005): At this level, a learner is near-native in their proficiency. It can take several years to reach this level of fluency in a second language. At this stage, a learner is truly bilingual because he can communicate as a native speaker would.</p> <p>These stages are crucial to the instructor of L2 students because to help students progress effectively, the instructor needs to know at what stage the learner finds himself (Hill and Björk).</p>

<p><b>Sound System:</b> How do second language learners learn the sound system and rules of the second language?</p>	<p>L2 students learn the sound system by listening to native speakers and possibly through formal instruction. As in L1 acquisition, this starts with recognizing what sounds are made in the L2 and which do not exist. These may be different from the native language. Rules are learned through explicit study as well as interactions in the L2. Through practice and interactions, L2 learners can begin to learn the rules of the second language (Craig 2011). In L1 this is a very natural and subconscious effort, but in L2 may require more explicit and intentional consideration and thought.</p>
<p><b>Learning Environment:</b> Where does early L2 language acquisition take place and under what type of conditions?</p>	<p>Most L2 acquisition is a result of being in an environment where the L2 is the dominant language. L2 may be found in formal classroom-like settings, in the community environment, or anywhere the L2 is spoken. Sometimes the L2 learner may be thrown into the new language with no background. For example, a child who recently arrived in the United States from Russia (L1) may begin school with little to no previous exposure to English (L2).</p>
<p><b>Related Factors:</b> What is interlanguage and fossilization and how do these things impact SLA?</p>	<p>Interlanguage is a phenomenon that results from acquiring a second language. The learner uses knowledge of L1 and L2 to create and develop an interlanguage which rules and elements from both languages (Craig, 2011). Interlanguage is internalized and individual to each learner. This impacts SLA because it can be difficult to help a student progress in language learning when his/her interlanguage is internalized and unique. This poses unique challenges to teaching L2 learners.</p> <p>Fossilization is a result of interlanguage and most typically occurs in adults, but it can happen at any age (Craig 2011). Fossilization can block a language learner from progressing in his/her language acquisition because errors have been solidified and retained in his/her individual interlanguage. It impacts SLA because it can cause a learner to plateau and continually make the same language errors.</p>